

00613

1962/10/23

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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59-M
Action

Control: 17413

Rec'd: October 23, 1962

~~EXR~~

Info

FROM: Brussels

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/SEC/AFR

SS

TO: Secretary of State

G

SP

NO: 638, October 23, 9 p.m.

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PRIORITY

ACTION DEPARTMENT PRIORITY 638, INFORMATION PARIS 248, LONDON 418, BONN 79, ROME 60, THE HAGUE 65, LUXEMBOURG 46

PARIS FOR USRO

Cuba.

EMBTel 636

When I saw Spaak this afternoon about Cuba he most understanding of our action and said he fully understood reasons compelling us to take measures announced by President. He had this morning report from Belgian Ambassador Cuba dated October 12 confirming Soviet build-up in Cuba (including missiles) and gave me copy.

Spaak also very understanding about matter of prior consultation. He said he would frankly have preferred us inform NATO allies 24 hours in advance of our action, "particularly since nobody could have valid objection, in view evidence of ground-to-ground missile build-up". However, he knew we were obliged to move swiftly and was not taking issue with us re consultation. (He also made very good statement to Belgian press saying GOB understood why Americans obliged to act and that NATO partners had been informed by US yesterday in accordance with regular procedures, etcetera).

Spaak said Cuba had been principal topic at Ministerial meeting

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2- 638, October 23, 9 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) from Brussels

of Six this morning. All of Six had shown comprehension our action and there had been no sour notes although much speculation as to future and particularly effect on Berlin. He added Couve de Murville had been most forthright in support our action, saying that while US had not consulted its allies, it had informed them in advance and this was all that was necessary. (Couve, he said, had implied that when vital interests of great nations are threatened, they could not be expected consult and negotiate with others as to their action).

As to future Spaak said there were 3 comments he would like make quite informally and would appreciate any comments we might have on them:

1. Unquestionably there would be some juridically-minded people who would challenge our legal right to declare a blockade. He thought we wise to stress we taking only partial measures to prevent missile base for aggression being established and that food and medical shipments would be permitted to pass through quarantine.

2. Cuba outside NATO treaty area and therefore if hostilities break out as result our action, operative articles of NATO treaty, in event of aggression against its members, would not seem to apply.

3. One of most serious preoccupations of European allies is how our action will affect Berlin situation. In Europe people think largely of their own European security problems and Cuba and other important strategic areas seem remote and much less important. Spaak emphasized that since Soviets may well respond to our Cuban initiative by measures against Berlin, it imperative that from here on out there be genuine, very close, and continuing consultation in NAC and bilaterally re Berlin problem. He feels this essential to avoid creating serious

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-3- 638, October 23, 9 p.m. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) from Brussels

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[strains within NATO alliance.

He referred to our taking Cuban issue to UNSC and asked whether we would take it to UNGA when Soviets vetoed in UNSC. I said I believed we intended do so.

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On "purely personal basis" Spaak believes that at some time we and Soviets must sit down together to thrash out Berlin and other matters. He thinks our initiatives in keeping dialogue with Soviets going first through Ambassador Thompson in Moscow and now through Dobrynin and Gromyko have been sound but point now seems to have been reached where we and Soviets going round and round. He recognized present moment not propitious but eventually he thought modus vivendi on Berlin and other points of friction would require a US-Soviet bilateral conference.]

MCARTHUR

LTR/14

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INCOMIN: TELEGRAM

Department of State

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59-M

Action

Control: 17401

Rec'd: October 23, 1962
7:08 p.m.

EUR

FROM: Brussels

Info

SS

TO: Secretary of State

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SP

NO: 638, October 23, 9 P.M. (SECTION II OF II)

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ACTION DEPARTMENT 638, INFORMATION PARIS 248, LONDON 418,
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He concluded by observing that while initial Soviet reaction had been strong in terms of propaganda language used, actual substance had been surprisingly mild, although obviously Soviets had not yet said their last word. In light of developments and dangers implicit in present situation he planned cancel his trip to Israel (Embassy telegram 593) and remain here in Brussels where he could be in close consultation with US and other NATO allies.

I also had separate meeting with Socialist Party President Collard today explaining in detail why we obliged to act and importance of maintaining unified allied front in face of Soviet threat. Collard also reacted with great understanding. While saying left-wing of Socialist Party would undoubtedly strongly criticize our action, he understood and appreciated our reasons. Significantly he said that in recent months President Kennedy has repeatedly given proof that he is man of good will who desires peaceful solutions and has not acted in bellicose manner but has been moderate and restrained. Therefore no objective observer can justly accuse US of acting in irresponsible or provocative manner. He also said that since Europeans insist we interest ourselves in defense of Europe and understand Europe's security

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-2- 638, October 23, 9 P.M. (SECTION II OF II), from Brussels

problems, it only fair that Europeans be prepared to recognize
we have equally strong interest and great problems re defense
of Western Hemisphere, and that we are much better informed
on these matters than our European allies

MACARTHUR

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